



**Commission on Aging
Select Committee on Senior Centers Meeting
June 28, 2022**

Members Present:

Chair Gloria Pitchford-Nicholas
Vice Chair Gene Guskowski
Commissioner John Griffith
Leon Davis
Sandra Dotson
Sharron Fitak
Deborah Lewis
Kelsie Lyons
Kent Mayfield
Howard Snyder
Alice Steuck Konkol
Cathy Wood, SOA

Members Excused:

County Supervisor Sequanna Taylor
Commissioner Cherie Swenson
Patricia Delmenhorst
Sally Lindner

Milwaukee County Staff

Michelle Allison, *DHHS*
Daniel Idzikowski, *DHHS*
Peter Nilles, *DAS*
Vonda Nyang, *DHHS*
Jill Knight, *DHHS*
Carrie Koss Vallejo, *DHHS*
Darryl Whyte, *DAS*

Attendees from the Public:

Shelia Carter
Laz Jackson, *SOA*
Lorraine Jacobs
Miriam Kaja
Commissioner Gloria Miller
Bobby Thomson

MINUTES

I. WELCOME, CALL TO ORDER AND REVIEW OF MEETING PURPOSE

Chairwoman Gloria Pitchford-Nicholas called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m., and reviewed the charge listed below with the Senior Center Select Committee before role and discussion. The Chair provided a summary of the purpose of each agenda item to discuss at today's meeting.

1. Evaluate suggestions presented in the "Envisioning report
2. Categorize suggestions as long or short term
3. Review programming and infrastructure needs at each Milwaukee County Senior Center
4. Develop and monitor short and long-term plans for senior centers and senior center programming.
5. Ascertain resources necessary to carry out these plans.
6. Report findings and recommendations to the Advisory Council.

II. ROLL CALL

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Advocacy and Policy Manager Daniel Idzikowski took roll call. A quorum was present.

III. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 12, 2022, AND APRIL 18, 2022, SENIOR CENTER SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES.

The meeting minutes for April 12, 2022, and April 18, 2022, were tabled for the next Senior Center Select Committee meeting.

IV. REVIEW OF CRITICAL QUESTIONS AND SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Vice Chair Gene Guskowski reviewed the Critical Questions and Summary of Recommendations document with the Committee. This document contains the questions posed by the 2019 Wisconsin Policy Forum Report “Young at Heart” as modified by the Committee in light of the progress made by the Commission and their new vision for senior centers as well as proposed responses to each of the questions. The questions address existing Milwaukee County owned senior center structures (repair, remodeling, or replacement of the centers), programming, and partnerships with other organizations. The Committee reviewed all six questions in turn along with the proposed responses.

The Committee discussed whether there was consensus from their previous meeting to keep all five County-owned senior centers open and that any new centers would be considered additional. The “Westlawn” proposal for a new senior center seemed to be presented to the Committee as a replacement for a current County-owned senior center. There was a request to redraft questions 2 and 3 to provide clarity. There was not consensus on this point as some members believed there must be openness to building new centers that meet the attribute requirements and, when they are open, shifting programming from existing centers that cannot be effectively modified to these new buildings.

Another discussion followed to clarify language regarding “multi-generational” versus “intergenerational” senior centers. The Committee agreed that the focus of the senior centers must be on the several generations of seniors aged fifty and older (Generation X, Boomers, the Silent Generation, and the Civic Generations) and the term “multigenerational” not be interpreted to encompass a general center open to any age group – youth or adult. However, the Committee acknowledged that younger adult caretakers of older adults should not be excluded, and that “intergenerational” programming can be beneficial to both seniors and youth, as long as it is discrete in nature and on the terms and consensus of the older adult participants.

The Committee also discussed the roles other municipalities might play in the operation of Milwaukee County owned Senior Centers and the future funding of these senior centers. The Committee acknowledged that it will be paramount to partner with other organizations for funding and programming purposes. There was also an interest expressed in utilizing the centers as hubs to regionalize the delivery of healthcare, social services, and recreational resources to older adults throughout the county. The Committee made several changes to the language in the responses to questions 4 through 6, but with regard to questions 2 and 3, the Committee could not come to a consensus on the response and decided to hold over agreement on the document and continue discussion at their next meeting.

V. FUNDING, NEXT STEPS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Idzikowski reviewed the ARPA Senior Center Funding Request chart outlining the plan for requesting County ARPA funds to support the Milwaukee County owned senior centers. The chart proposes that \$15 million be set aside for the modernization, renovation, and repair of Clinton Rose, Washington, and Wilson, including existing capital requests and that \$15 million be utilized to partner with affordable housing initiatives to construct new senior center facilities in the vicinity of Kelly and McGovern. (Note: this proposal does not contemplate the “Westlawn” proposal, which is a separate initiative). This full ARPA request has not been considered by the ARPA review committee and it is not clear whether it will advance at all. In the alternative, the chart also details both the general capital modernization needs applicable to all the Milwaukee County owned senior centers as well as the specific capital requests made by each specific center.

VI. NEXT MEETING TIME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS: No announcements. The Committee decided not to meet in July and to resume meeting in August.

VII. ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 3:04 p.m.

The next Select Committee on Senior Centers meeting will be held virtually on Tuesday, August 23, 2022, at 1 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vonda Nyang
Executive Assistant